

**Annals of the DeRosset Family  
as compiled from original documents by  
Catherine DeRosset Meares  
1906**



**Part B: pages 34 to 62**

*Scanned from a copy of the book in the possession of  
James Bailey deRosset of Asheville, North Carolina, 2012*

CHAPTER IV.

HON'BLE LEWIS HENRY DEROSSET.

1724\*-1786.

*King's Councillor for the Province of North Carolina.*

COUNCILLOR DEROSSET.

*Copy of commission to Lewis Henry deRosset, appointing him a member of the Council under Governor Dobbs.*

By their Excellencies the Lord Justices.

Tho: Cantuar:

Marlborough.

Granville P. Gower C. P. S.

Anson.

We being well satisfied of the loyalty, integrity and ability of Lewis deRosset junior Esqr. do hereby in His Majesty's name direct & require you forthwith upon the receipt of hereof to swear and admit him the said deRosset junior to be one of His Majesty's Council in His Majesty's Province of North Carolina, in the room of William Forbes Esq. deceased, and for so doing this shall be your warrant.

Given at Whitehall the tenth day of June 1752 in the twenty-fifth year of His Majesty's Reign.

By their Excellencies Command

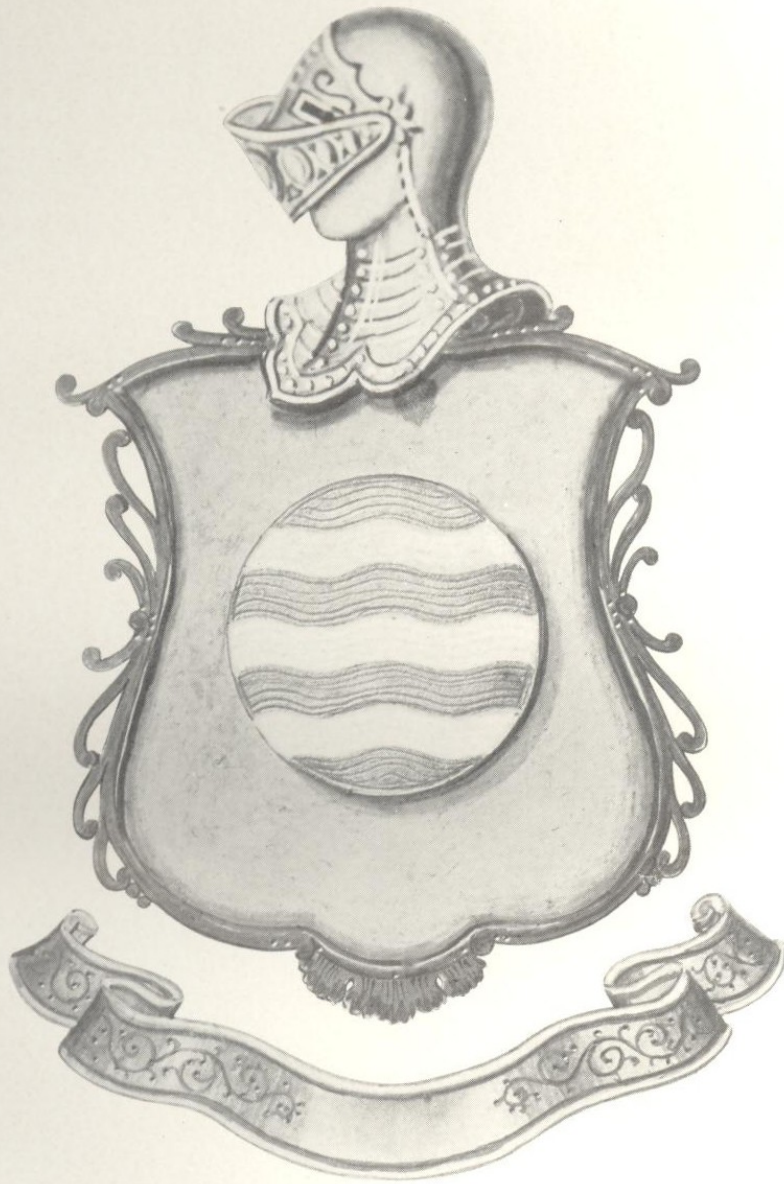
Claudius Amgard.

To Gabriel Johnson Esqr. His Majesty's Governor of the Province of North Carolina in America. And in his absence, to the Commander in chief or to the President of His Majesty's Council of the said Province for the time being.

*This document bears on the left side Seal with two roses. Also three excise stamps, 11 shillings and 6 pence each.*

Lewis H., the elder of the two sons brought to Carolina by their parents, Dr. Armand John (1) and "the Lady of Ucetia," was born in Montpelier, France, about 1722 and was given the name of his grand-father, Louis deRousset, of the French, and later of the British army. In 1755 he married Margaret Walker (1733-1785), whose brother, Capt. James Walker, became later the husband of Louis' niece, Magdalene M. duBois. His letters bear ample testimony to his tender love and affection for her.

Mrs. deRosset died in 1785, and Louis H. deRosset, her husband, died February 22, 1786, in London, England, an exile in 1779 from the Province. They had no issue. "Uncle Lewis" being the elder son was the head of the family,



DE FONTFROIDE



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and after the death in 1759 of his brother, Moses John, he was its sole representative in public affairs.

The Colonial Records of North Carolina bear witness to the value of his services. In 1751 he represented Wilmington in the House of Burgesses at Newbern—serving on important committees with men of distinction. He was Chairman of Public Accounts for years, and Justice of the Peace (“Quorum”) appointed by the Council. In 1752 he was commissioned Member of the King’s Council, under Governor Gabriel Johnston, which office he held under successive Governors, “until the end of the Royal Government, discharging at different times some of the most important offices.” In 1754 he was appointed Commissioner “for stamping and emitting the sum of 40,000 pounds publick bills of credit.” In 1761 he resigned the office of “Receiver General of His Majesty’s Quit Rents in the Province.” (John Rutherford was appointed his successor.)

“Honorable Lewis deRosset was Adjutant General on General Hugh Waddell’s Staff in the war of the Regulators in May, 1771.”

He was also Lieut.-Gen. of Provincial Troops under Governor Tryon in 1768.

As a Member of the Council and of the Assembly his intelligent activity for the interests of the Province is abundantly shown. He seems to be ever on the alert to obtain some advantage for his own section, though equally thoughtful for the general welfare of the State and constantly introducing bills for internal improvements of all kinds. As witness the following: A bill for leave to build a Church of St. James’ Parish; for regulating the exports of the Cape Fear; for appointing inspectors in New Hanover County; to petition the Postmaster General to establish a Post Office in the Province; to establish quarantine at “The Fort;” for leave to build a Church at Brunswick and for appointing a committee to receive subscriptions therefor.

These are only a few of the objects he had at heart for the good of Church as well as State, and which he was largely instrumental in securing.

As a Christian, he was reverent and devout; as a Churchman, loyal in spirit and active in good works. Following in the footsteps of their father, he and his brother, with their kinsmen of the Walker family, were prominent among the founders of the Parish Church of St. James. As a man of noble type, of strict integrity and high sense of honor, he commanded the respect and esteem of all who knew him. He had been fortunate in his mercantile ventures and was, besides, a successful planter on a large scale, so that before the Revolutionary troubles began he had amassed, for those days, a large fortune. Devotedly attached to his own family, they in turn regarded him with tender affection, and when the times that tried men’s souls came, tearing asunder kindred and friends,



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they felt no bitterness at his decision, nor ever in after years uttered a word of blame that he had clung to the Royal cause. They knew that he grieved at the oppressive measures of the British Government and that his sympathies were with his kindred and fellow-citizens of the oppressed colonies. And they only could understand the (perhaps over-scrupulous) sense of honor that kept him loyal to the King, to whose service he had long been bound by repeated oaths of allegiance. We now can see his great mistake, but we can at least appreciate the conscientious devotion to duty, as *he* saw it, which led to such sacrifices as he made.

Happy in his home, honored and beloved by family and friends, rich in this world's goods and in possession of all that men hold dear in life, what a struggle there must have been between all these on the one side and the consciousness of duty, honor and integrity on the other! Yet he accepted the sacrifice, and in 1779 was banished by the Province on pain of death if he returned. His letters, further on, tell the story of his later years. The record of his death and place of burial for nearly a century was unknown to us until discovered by my brother Louis. He died, as has been said, February 22, 1786, and was buried in St. Andrew's Church-yard, Holborn.

There is an element of tender pathos in the story of this good man's life. Exiled in early childhood from his native Province, with loss of all worldly possessions, his later years saddened by war and strife and banishment, losing again home and kindred and fortune, his life was ever tempest-tossed. Even in death his poor body could not rest in peace, for when the great London viaduct was constructed, St. Andrew's Church-yard was invaded and the sleepers in God's acre were removed to parts unknown.

It was probably during his stay in England, 1782-'86, that the French Government tendered to him the restoration of the family titles and estates on condition that he would return to France and to the Roman Church. "The offer was of course rejected," says my grand-father (his nephew). It was at this period that Louis XIV., under the kindly influence of Neckar, offered concessions to Huguenot exiles under these conditions, and in 1787 he signed the "Edict of Toleration," restoring unconditionally the status of the Huguenots.

At Doctors' Commons was found the following record: "November 27, 1787, Letters of Administration with will annexed granted to Thomas Younger, lawful attorney for Jas. Walker, Armand John deRosset and Armand John duBois, nephews of the deceased and surviving executors." Mr. Younger gave bond to the Archbishop of Canterbury in the sum of 10,000 Pounds Sterling.

This would seem to indicate that his means were considerable; he was granted the indemnity for which he petitioned the Government for losses sustained because



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of his loyalty; but it is very certain that little of his legacies ever reached his nephews, both of whom were minors at the time. Uncle Lewis was, indeed, a whole-hearted Englishman; his memories of his native land were embittered by wrong and sorrow, and England had sheltered and honored his grand-father in his exile.

He changed the French spelling of his name to its English form, "Lewis," and he even refused introduction to a French officer, serving with the British Army during the occupation of Wilmington, who claimed to be related to the deRossets.

Through all his life, so full of trial, trouble and temptation, his integrity was always his pre-eminent characteristic. Upright and honorable in every relation of life; true and just in all his dealings with his fellow-men; loyal and grateful to the country whose protection had been given to his persecuted forefathers, and true to the Faith for which they had suffered, his name has come down to us as the synonym of truth and honesty and righteousness of life—while those who knew and loved him best revered and treasured his memory till one by one they were called to join him in the Eternal Home of God's Saints. There may they all rest in Peace, and may Light perpetual shine upon them.

The following documents and letters relating to the latter years of Councillor deRosset's life are almost illegible and fast falling to pieces; it is thought best to preserve them here for the information of future generations:

*Copy.*—Memorial of Louis H. deRosset for Indemnity for losses &c., dated 1783.

"To the Honble. the Commisioners for the examining into the case of the American Sufferers—

The Memorial of Lewis Henry deRosset late of North Carolina Humbly Sheweth That your Memorialist was sworn in a member of his Majesties Honble. Council for said Province in the year 1752, and continued in that station until the late Rebellion there put an end to his Majesty's Government in North Carolina, and he begs leave to refer to the Certificates of their Excellcs. Genl. Tryon and Govr. Martin, the last two Governors of that Province, for the manner in which he behaved himself in that station, and in general for his conduct as a faithful & loyal subject.

That your Memorialist from the first took an open and Decided part in favor of the King's Government.

That in 1779 your memorialist was called upon in consequence of an act passed by the usurped Government to renounce his allegiance, and take the Oaths to them, and on refusal of which all persons so refusing were banished from the Province, on the pain of death if they returned; But your memorialist cheerfully preferring his Duty to God and his Sovereign refused to take the Oaths—

In consequence of a clause in the said act permitting persons so banished to sell or carry off their Estates or effects, or leave them subject to confiscation, your memorialist under these disastrous circumstances was compelled to dispose of his Estate in such manner as he imagined might best tend to His and His Family's support, and accordingly sold a great part of his



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Estate at whatsoever he could get (Which in his distrest situation must have been much under the real value) and with the money arising therefrom, he purchased a vessel, that he fitted out at a great expense, and loaded with Tobacco, Indigo and Staves, and sailed from Cape Fear River the last day of April 1779 with an intent to proceed to England where, from every information, the said Vessel and Cargoe must have produced above eight thousand pounds sterling—The remainder of his Estate, consisting of some lands, Slaves, Money, Debts, and other effects, to the amount of above two thousand Pounds Sterling more he left in the hands, of persons he could confide in for the support of his wife, whom he was obliged to leave behind him—

That your memorialist on his Voyage was on the American coast three times captured, the last time by an American Privateer, and carried into New London (Conn.), where he was deprived of his vessel and everything he had on board, and sent thus plundered and stripped to New York, so that a total loss of that part of his Estate was the consequence of his refusing to renounce his Rights and Allegiance as a British subject—

That after your memorialist arrived in New York, he there waited until Genl. Clinton sailed to South Carolina, when he went in the same fleet, and soon after the taking of Charleston was, through the recommendation of Genl. Tryon and Govr. Martin appointed in May 1780 by Genl. Clinton the principal Commissary of prisoners at that place, in which situation he remained until the evacuation of Charleston took place, when he had no other resource but to come with the Fleet to England.\*

That your memorialist begs leave to inform you, that great part of the interest he left for the support of his wife in the hands of confidential Friends in North Carolina, has been greatly pillaged and plundered, and that a person in whose hands he left a considerable sum of money has so much suffered by persecution, that it is hardly possible he can get repayment thereof—Thus that part of his Estate he left in North Carolina he can get but little of—

Thus situated after a loss altogether of at least ten thousand Pounds Sterling, your memorialist finds himself destitute of all means of support and provision—

Your memorialist therefore humbly begs leave to submit himself and his case to your Honor's Consideration in full confidence that you will be pleased to recommend him for such relief and support as he may be entitled to.

And your memorialist as ever in duty bound shall ever pray.—

LEWIS H. DEROSSET.

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\*An incident relating to this period and illustrating the strict integrity of his uncle is thus related by my grand-father.

"While he was Commissary of Prisoners in Charleston during the Revolutionary War, a man—supposed to be a gentleman—called and offered to relieve him of the arduous duties of that office, guaranteeing to him the full amount of his receipts therefrom, reserving to himself only such perquisites as he could derive from it. My uncle turned on him with indignation for supposing him scoundrel enough to accept such a proposal, saying that however laborious his duties might be he would continue to perform them, rather than put it in the power of so unprincipled a fellow to cheat his King or the poor prisoners, which was obviously his intention."



DE CASSAGNES



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*Copy.*—Memorial of Lewis Henry deRosset to the British Government for half-pay for services during the Revolutionary War, dated July 7th, 1784.

"To the Right Honble. Lord Sidney, one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, &c. &c.

The Memorial of Louis Henry deRosset humbly sheweth—

That your memorialist was sworn a Member of His Majesty's Council for the Province of North Carolina in America in 1752 and continued as such whilst His Majesty's Government existed in that Province—during which time he discharged some of the most important offices there. That your memorialist from the first refusing to join the Americans in their unnatural Rebellion was forced to leave the country and his family and with what of his property he could bring away sailed from the Cape Fear the last of April 1779 and on his voyage was taken by American privateers and carried into the New England Provinces where he was deprived of all the effects he had with him, to a considerable amount, and thus plundered was sent from New London by Flag of Truce to New York, where he arrived in June 1779 and there remained until Sir Henry Clinton sailed from thence to attack Charles Town, where your memorialist went in the same Fleet thinking it his duty to give every assistance in his power.

That your memorialist soon after the taking of Charles Town was by Sir Henry Clinton, appointed the Principal Commissary of Prisoners there, in the execution of which office he continued until the evacuation of that place, when he was obliged to come to England with the Fleet, having by orders from Genl. Leslie sent all the Books and papers relative to his office to New York.

That your Memorialist begs leave to represent that his Pay as Principal Commissary of Prisoners was twenty shillings sterling per day exclusive of rations, &c. and that he was paid at that rate to the last day of Dec. 1782 by Genl. Leslie, but from that time he has not received any further pay. All the different officers and deputies in your Memorialist's department were paid up to the same day, of whom there is at present but one in England, namely Mr. Robert Cooke, who was Sir Henry Clinton's appointed Deputy Commissary with a salary of ten shillings per day.

Lastly, your Memorialist trusts that your Lordships will be pleased to take his case and his unhappy condition into your serious consideration, and that you will from his long services, his great and heavy losses, and the zeal and integrity with which he discharged the important office of Principal Commissary of Prisoners at Charles Town, think him justly entitled to be put on half pay, that he may be enabled to support the remainder of his life with some degree of comfort, after all his losses, misfortunes and fatigues.

And your Memorialist in duty bound shall ever pray &c. &c.,

(Signed)

July 7, 1784.

LEWIS H. DEROSSET.

This note is appended to this paper by Mr. deRosset himself:

"The above copy of my Memorial together with Governor Tryon's letter of Recommendation to Lord Sydney I delivered at the Secretary of State's office on the 7th July, 1784, when I was desired to take them to Col. Delancey with the following endorsement:

"Mr. ————— begs Col. Delancey will consider the subject of the enclosed and if proper, to insert Mr. deRosset's name in the list of Provincial Officers for half pay."

In a letter dated in Aug. 1785 Mr. deRosset writes, "I have just obtained the grant of half pay."



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Copies of the Certificates of Governors Tryon and Martin:

"I have read the annexed Memorials of Mr. deRosset who was well known to me during the six or seven years that I was Governor of the Province of North Carolina, and who I have since seen in New York, as mentioned in his Memorial, and I have much pleasure in certifying that from the intimate knowledge I have of his principles both in public and private life, and the full trial I have had of his Loyalty and attachment to His Majesty's Government, I have no doubt but that the several matters and facts set forth in his Memorial are strictly just and true. I must further add, in justice to the opinion I entertain of the superior Worth and Merit of Mr. deRosset that I believe no man has a more equitable and honorable claim than himself, to the Favor and Consideration of the Government as a loyal American sufferer, and that, as such, he has my fullest and warmest Recommendation."

"Given under my hand in Upper Grosvener Street this 26th day of February, 1783."

(Signed)

WM. TRYON."

J. A. No. 2.

The Recommendation of Governor Martin:

"To All Whom it May Concern:

"Having perused the Memorial annexed of Mr. Lewis Henry deRosset I have no scruple to declare that I consider it a very modest representation of his case, although I cannot take upon myself to judge of his loss of property, as I can of his Loyalty and sufferings. I have the fullest persuasion, from the general integrity of his character, that his estimate is strictly just and honorable; as was all his conduct in publick and private life as far as my knowledge goes, and in all the report of the County in which he spent the greater part of his life—Borne down by misfortunes brought upon him by a virtuous attachment to His Majesty and the British Constitution at an advanced age, he seems to me a gentleman most highly deserving of the Favor and Consideration of the Government, and as such he has my sincerest and warmest Recommendation. Signed

JO. MARTIN.

"New Norfolk St., March 1st, 1783."

J. A. No. 3.

PRIVATE LETTERS FROM LOUIS HENRY DEROSSET TO MR. JAMES WALKER,  
WILMINGTON, ON CAPE FEAR, NORTH CAROLINA.

LONDON, Aug. 17th, 1785.

Dear Sir:—I want words to express to you my feelings on the receipt of your letter of the 2nd January, informing me of the unexpected death of my dearly beloved wife. You may easier conceive than my words can convey the bitter anguish of my soul on this mournful information; the more unexpected the more poignant I felt the force of the fatal stroke that deprived me of the best of wives whose tender affection I had experienced in every circumstance of life. To say she was the faithful Friend, the chaste Wife, the cheerful Companion, and that her honest breast was an enemy to deceit, would not do justice to her great Merit; but possessed of these and of all other virtues which I knew from long experience she possessed in an eminent degree, had so endeared her to me that I fully enjoyed every conjugal Felicity during the thirty years I had the happiness of being with her. When I was forced to leave her the separation was cruel and the unhappy days that I have passed since that time a continued scene of trouble and confusion; nor could I have a prospect of happiness until we could have met together again in peace and quietness. It was for this purpose that I applied to obtain half-pay in order to have enabled me to support her with some degree of decency, though not with that



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affluence I could have wished for. But I knew that with her prudent management we could have gone through life here in peace and content. I had just obtained the grant of half-pay and only waited for an opportunity to take advantage of the summer season, when she might naturally expect a pleasant and speedy passage, to embark to England, when your letters by the "Castor" came to hand the 10th of April, which at once put an end to all my pleasing expectations of returning happiness, nothing now but an horrid gloomy prospect succeeds to my flattering and delusive hopes. Thus are the wretched mortals in this life ever subject to disappointments. It is my duty as a Christian to submit to the Divine dispensations—the draught is bitter and I must swallow it, but I cannot say I do it with the Resignation I ought. No! my dear, my best Friend, my faithful Companion is gone, and I shall ever whilst I have being lament my irreparable loss,—neither time nor place can remove her dear Image from my mind; there she is perpetually present and the only pleasure I enjoy is to think of her perpetually. I have no doubt that through the Merits and Mediation of our Blessed Savior, she is received into the Mansions of Eternal Felicity, and I pray to God when He thinks proper to remove me from this transitory life, I may there with her enjoy eternal Happiness for ever and ever. Amen.

I lament the affliction your Mother must feel in the loss of her valuable Daughter, and would gladly contribute everything in my power towards alleviating her grief. Pray remember to inform her that I bear her the most cordial respect and shall always venerate her as the Mother of my dearest Wife. And be pleased to assure Mrs. Quince that I shall ever retain the affection I always had for my Wife's nearest relatives. I sincerely thank you both for the attentions paid to your deceased Sister and I am much obliged to you for your care in having her buried with Proper Decency,—for no cost ought to have been spared to shew the Esteem and just Regard due to her great Merit. I should be glad, if possible, to have my bones laid with hers when I die.

On the 14th last month I received your favors per Mr. M'Guire. I should desire that what effects my dear Wife left, may be disposed of in the following manner: Her clothes and wearing apparel Mrs. Quince and her Mother will dispose of as they may judge proper—if they are worth their keeping, it will give me great satisfaction. I should be glad if three of the Rings:—I mean the Wedding Ring, the Mourning Ring for my Father, and an old French Diamond Ring given me by my God-father who was a relative, may be sent to me by the first opportunity. The other Rings, Buckles and all other Trinkets I hope your good sister Mrs. Quince will do me the favor to accept of. All the plate, a small trunk of which I left with Mr. Roger Smith when I left Charles Town to send to my Wife, I hope Mrs. Quince will take care of for me until I give further directions. There are six large Family pictures which want fitting up and repairing; I shall be glad to have them sent over here when I can tell what to do with them. In the meantime I hope Mrs. Quince will take care of them for me. If there is any of the household furniture Mrs. Quince may choose, I desire of her to accept of them—the rest dispose of as you judge proper. Of the Printed Books, you will be pleased to accept of such as you may choose and the rest do as you please with. I must beg of you to search among my papers for an old French Mem. Book of my Father's, that did belong to my Grand-father. In it are several of his memoranda—my Father's marriage to my Mother and the birth of all their children. It is a narrow paper book, covered with blue or brown paper. I thought I had left it with your Sister and had desired her to send it to me, but she could not then find it. Pray make a diligent search for it, and forward it to me, as it may be of some service to me, and can be of no consequence to any body else.

All my Account books and all my papers of every kind be pleased to have properly secured until I give further directions.



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I should be much obliged to Mrs. Quince if she would be pleased to send me some of my Wife's hair, that I may have a few mourning Rings made. I suppose the confusion she was in made her forget it before now.

LONDON, Oct. 26, 1785.

To Mr. Jas. Walker.

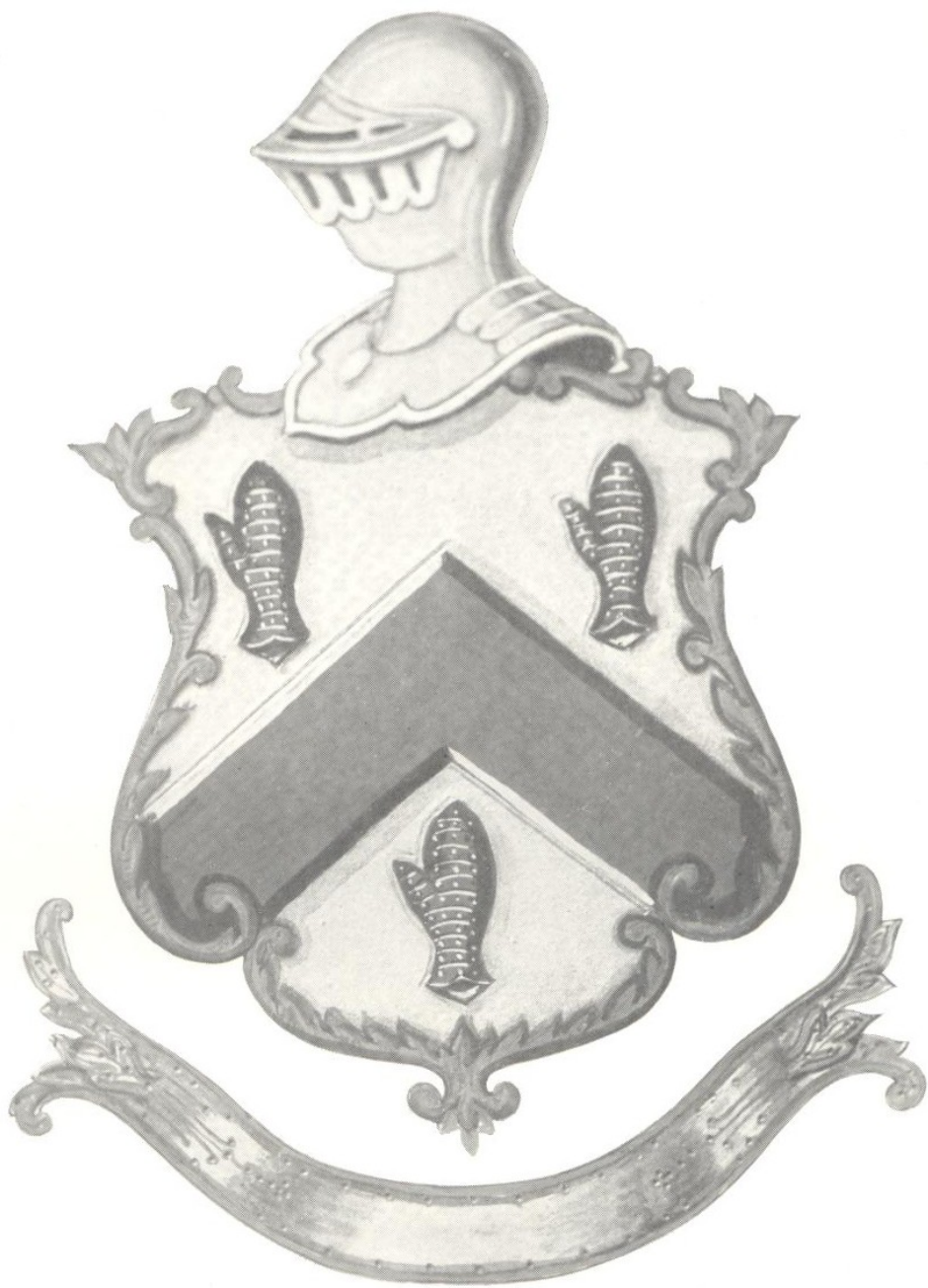
Dear Sir:—As I think a safe opportunity offers for N. Carolina, I embrace it, as I hope this will from thence reach you in safety and serves to enclose a copy of my letter of Aug. 17th, which I wrote to you by the way of Virginia and I flatter myself may by this time have reached you. I fully trust that you will observe my directions in the several matters mentioned in the aforesaid letter, and further that you will send me an inventory of the several things my dearly beloved Wife left behind her—and I hope that you will by no means omit disposing of them as I have directed.

In your account which I have desired you to forward to me, pray be as particular as possible that I may be fully acquainted of everything in your hands. The amount of the moneys I left in your hands in April 1779 was above 6,000 Pounds. You also remember 600 Pounds you received from Mrs. Heron afterwards for a Lot I sold her before I came away, but I never had any account of the Corn, Pease, Rice, Provisions, Tools and many other things I left on the Plantation. You will therefore include them, as also, Negro hire. Before Mr. Quince had agreed to hire the Negroes in 1782 my Wife told me you had received the hire of some Negroes (men) yourself, before that time especially the whole of the hire of Virgil to some person up the North West, of which none came to her hands. You will also include the whole of the hire of the Negroes to Mr. Quince, and charge what my Wife wrote me she had received, to the amount of about eight Pounds, your money. She said she had only left for her own use, and this was confirmed to me by Mr. Quince himself, but he said that you yourself had hired some of the Negroes and was to pay their hire, and as to those he had in his own employ, he should pay for them when he returned as it was not in his power to do it here.

Poor Mr. Parker Quince died here I think the beginning of Feb. last. I believe the disorder that caused his death was an ulcer in the bladder. I went to see him a few days before he died—he did not then think he was in any great danger, but a few days afterwards I heard he was dead. He made his will before he died and left his Uncle Mr. John Quince his executor here, and I am told, his Wife, Mr. Fredk. Jones and Mr. Callender executors in America. As a copy of this will is sent to North Carolina, and must have got there before now, you will see how he has disposed of his effects,—in the mean time Mr. John Quince has qualified here.

Soon after I received your letter I went to the City to make enquiry of the several matters you mention. I saw Mr. Kensington at his own house and he informed me that the proceeds of the Cargo of the "Castor" did not net but between three and four hundred Pounds Sterling. A loss of course must ensue that no profits that can be made on goods from here can compensate. He told me that a great deal of the Indigo was very bad, naval stores low, and though Bounty was given it was not an article that would bear freight. The only thing that had answered was the Reeds (?) so that I imagine the best way would be to purchase proof of ———? ——— the Country to be paid there. And indeed Credit in America is very low here, the Merchants not choosing to trust their property where they are not sure of recovering their debts. If there was a Commercial treaty open between this Kingdom and the American States, perhaps Credit in some measure might be restored. But I am apt to believe it would be with great caution, for many traders from here have by their American connections been ruined.





DE GONDIN

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Mr. Kensington also told me that the Savannah, which was lately arrived, was unloading and that he had directions from both Mr. John Quince and Mr. Grey to put her up to sale,—so that you will see her no more.

He also informed me that the Guinea Scheme was at an end; that a vessel intended for that trade and to have been sent to your house was ordered to be sold, and nothing more would be done in the matter.

As Mr. Eyres is dead I have not had an opportunity of knowing what agreement he had made with Mr. Quince; all that I could find out was that he was to have been concerned in it. I think you can have no expectation of any Guinea-men and as I suppose you will receive letters from Messrs. Kensington & Cunningham you will have full information on all matters.

I should be glad to have a copy of Mrs. deRosset's will;\* Mr. Bridgen cannot find the one  
\*The widow of his father, Dr. A. J. deRosset.

you sent him. I cannot tell where to find a residence in my distracted condition. Had it pleased the Almighty to have prolonged the life of my Dear, my faithful Wife, the darling of my Soul, I could have been perfectly content and happy with her in a Cottage, but without her a palace would have no charms. God knows best what will become of me! All I can say at present is that I shall stay about this City until I can have a hearing before the Commissioners for Compensation for my Losses. Therefore continue to address your letters to me to the care of Messrs. Bridgen & Waller, in Lovell Court, Pater Noster Row—and I pray let me hear from you as often and as fully as you can.

Remember me with the firmest affection to your Mama, to your good Sister Quince, your Wife, your Son and all your connections. I congratulate you on the birth of your daughter and I hope she will be a worthy imitator of the virtues of her dear Aunt.

Adieu for the present, and be assured that I shall always retain the warmest regard for all my Wife's relations and that I am with sincere esteem Dr. Sir,

Yours &c.,

LEWIS H. DEROSSET.

P. S. Gov. Martin desired me some days ago to forward a Mem. for one Willett who lives about Lockwood's Folly relative to an orphan Niece of his whose Father died at New York and the Gov. took care of her. I enclose the mem.

Pray oblige me so far as to have it safely delivered to Mr. Willett that he may give directions to his Niece.

As I suppose Mr. Mallett has long since paid his debt and that half the balance due from me to Mr. Wichely's Estate has been paid to Miss Wichely according to my desire. If she is yet in your State and will take out proper letters of administration, be pleased to pay her the remainder of the balance due from me to her Father's Estate and take from her a full and sufficient discharge and deliver to her all the Books, Accounts, Patents, Deeds, &c., belonging to the Estate. They were always kept by themselves and therefore give no trouble. Let her be paid to her satisfaction and an end put to this miserable business.

A number of years ago I renewed a power of attorney from Mr. Henry Lowther of Hurdleston near Rells in the County of Meath, Ireland, by virtue of which I administered on the Estate of Samuel and Joseph Woodward and from a mem. I made when I left North Caroline, there is a balance due from me of one hundred and seventy-seven Pounds ten Shillings and one Farthing old Proclamation money, the exchange not above 80 per cent. on Sterling. I have not heard for some years past from Mr. Lowther, tho confusion of the times may have prevented him from writing, or perhaps he may be dead. In his last letter to me he had left it to myself to remit as I thought proper but being afraid if any considerable loss should attend a remittance I might be blamed, I intended to have paid him here if I had got safe, but losing everything it became impossible. As perhaps some letters from him (in case he is dead, from his Representatives) may have come to your hands pray remit the amount of that sum



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according to any directions they may have given, and in case no directions have got to your hands, then write to Mr. Lowther and let him know you are ready to ship the balance due to him agreeably to his orders. The account is in my old largest account book. I must not forget to inform you that I left an old mahogany Desk belonging to the Woodward Estate, not included in the above balance, let it be appraised or sold and the amount added to the balance and remitted with it. I beg your particular attention to these matters, and let not my Character and Credit Suffer through neglect.

I cannot tell what to say about the moneys that may be in your hands, but I think it will be best, until the opportunity may offer of remitting, (which I hope you will be able to do soon) that it be put out at interest on good security that I may be sure of getting it when I want it—and pray send me by first opportunity a full and perfect statement of the amount that I may know what I have to depend on. I must insist on Mr. Jenkes paying the Sterling money according to his note in your hands, together with interest from the time it was due. He may send me a Bill of Exchange on England for such a trifling sum.

As to my legacy from Mrs. deRosset's Estate as Mr. Bridgen promised to pay it here when he could get remittances from Carolina, all I beg of you on this subject is to press Mr. Roger Smith to remit without loss of time. This you can certainly do as your name is mentioned in the Bond and are the only qualified executor of Mrs. deRosset's will. I greatly counted on his complying with his agreement, but by no means stop any money of the Estate on my account as my Attorney, nor as such give any discharge for my Legacy.

What Mr. London's motives can be for not having delivered you Mr. Smith's bond, as I expected he would have done long ago, I am an entire stranger to,—it is a mystery I cannot pretend to account for. Mr. Bridgen expresses great dissatisfaction at not having received answers to several letters he wrote you. He has lately had a letter from Mr. Atwood of New York, informing him that by your desire he sent a Power of Attorney to Mr. M'Lain to recover a Legacy from Mrs. deRosset's Estate, at which he is greatly surprised, and I am afraid entertains feelings no way to your advantage. Pray then write him fully and send a statement of your accounts. You will also not forget what debts due to me you have collected, especially Capt. Fishers, which must amount to at least Five Hundred Pounds Sterling; and the amount of Mr. Mallett's note, which Mr. Quince told me you had received. In short let the account be particular and full, and the balance due me to the time of making out the account be clearly ascertained, that I may know how to make my will by disposing of my property in such manner as I may think just—for I want to consider my Wife's relations as well as my own.

My situation continues the same as it was when I last wrote you. My great, my irreparable Loss oppresses my Spirit, and my dearly beloved Wife's image ever present to my mind, banishes every other idea from me. Let me hear from you as often as convenient, and don't forget to send by different conveyances. I shall only add that I have had no letter from home since that by Mr. McGuire, though several vessels from North and South Carolina have arrived.

My best respects wait on your Mama and your good Sister. I wish I could hear from themselves. My love to your family and to all your relatives, and be pleased to remember me to all my enquiring friends, if I have any with you; for as I have had no letters from any I almost think they have forgot one who has always respected many worthy characters that he had the pleasure of being acquainted with.

Be assured that I am with truth dear Sir Your very affectionate and humble servant,  
LEWIS H. DEROSSET.



## CHAPTER V.

MOSES JOHN DEROSSET, M. D. (1).

Dec. 27th, 1726-Dec. 25th, 1767.

*"The Patriot Mayor."*

Moses John, the younger of the two sons of Dr. Armand J. deRosset and "the lady of Ucetia," was born in London, December 27, 1726 (St. John's Day). He was a lad not ten years old when his father emigrated to North Carolina, but it was from him that sprang the now numerous family of his name.

Of the childhood of Dr. Moses John little is recorded. The marriage of his sister, Mrs. duBois, in 1741, followed by his mother's death in 1746, left him to his father's sole care. It would interest us to know whether he was educated at home under the paternal eye and tuition, or had been sent to England, as was the custom in Colonial times. At any rate, his able and accomplished father must have taken care that opportunities for study and manly development should not be lacking. Tradition tells us that his democratic spirit was early manifested, and that he often shocked his father's aristocratic prejudices. One of his youthful escapades, though not in itself vicious, led to serious consequences for himself. He had become enamored of a certain Miss B——, a very respectable girl, but of social standing far beneath that of the deRossets. Such a mésalliance was a terrible calamity in the minds of aristocratic Colonists, and to avert it his father deemed it necessary to send the youngster away from the scene of temptation. So he was put on a ship as supercargo and sent on a long sea voyage, to cool his ardor and repent at leisure for his indiscretion. Poor fellow! he was cruelly punished, for the ship was captured by a Spanish or Algerian privateer, and for two years he was not heard from. Of his imprisonment and sufferings nothing is now known, but, whether by release or escape, he finally appeared in Boston, stripped of all his possessions. There he was most kindly received by Mr. Thomas Campbell, brother of his father's friend, Mr. William Campbell, of Wilmington, and being furnished with funds, clothing and all things needful, he proceeded on his way home. Thoroughly cured of his boyish "affaire du cœur," he found his lady-love already married to one more suitable to her own station. His father's heart and home were ready



## ANNALS OF THE DEROSSET FAMILY

to welcome the prodigal son, who soon devoted his energies to the study of medicine, and became an exemplary citizen and successful practitioner.

His first word of public service for the Colony was on January 7, 1754, when he was commissioned Captain in the North Carolina Regiment commanded by Col. James Innes and Lieut.-Col. Caleb Grainger, which was sent to aid Virginia against the French and Indians. (Col. Records, Vol. V., Pref. Notes, and Vol. XI., p. 235.)

These were the first troops raised by any Colony for service outside of its own borders. A fact to be remembered among many others creditable to North Carolina, and yet persistently ignored by United States historians. This was more than a year before the arrival and defeat of Gen. Braddock, in 1755.

Dr. deRosset was for many years a County Commissioner, and member of the Board of Aldermen of Wilmington. The records tell that he headed the list of petitioners for the improvement of public roads in New Hanover County.

Of the public spirit of Dr. deRosset and the hold he had upon the confidence and esteem of his fellow-citizens, we have ample proof in his being called to fill the important and honorable position of Mayor of the town at a serious crisis in its history—January, 1766. The Board of Aldermen from whom Dr. M. J. deRosset was elected Mayor was composed of John Sampson (then Mayor), Marmaduke Jones (Recorder), Wm. Dry, Cornelius Harnett, John Lyon, Frederick Gregg, Caleb Grainger, Daniel Dunbibbin, Arthur Mabson, Moses John deRosset, John duBois and Samuel Green—the most eminent men of this section. (See City Records.)

The Stamp Act troubles were rousing the inhabitants on the Cape Fear to a sense of coming danger; the landing of the stamps at Brunswick in November, 1765, had been successfully resisted by the prompt and gallant action of the people of New Hanover and Brunswick Counties under the lead of Col. John Ashe and Col. Hugh Waddell. Surely it was a remarkable tribute to a man of a profession so peaceable and apart from political strife that he should have been called to an office demanding not only the exercise of ordinary virtues, but qualities of intellectual and administrative ability. The history of that period tells us that the Doctor was faithful to his trust, and justified the choice of those who had so honored him.

And here I would emphasize the fact so grossly overlooked by our historians, viz: that it was in the Cape Fear Colony, Province of North Carolina, that the first open, *armed* resistance was made by *the people* to the hated Stamp Act. It was on February 28th, 1766, eight years before the much-lauded "Boston Tea Party" of disguised men in the darkness of night—in 1774. The





Ruins of St. Philip's Church  
Old Brunswick on the Cape Fear



## ANNALS OF THE DEROSSET FAMILY

stamps were *not* landed, and the Mayor of Wilmington did his part in preventing supplies to be carried to the British ships; while his military friends and compatriots did their duty of resistance to the authority of the Royal Governor Tryon. (When will our Southland awake from her lethargy and proclaim to her children of to-day the noble deeds of their heroic forefathers?)\*

McRee, in his Memoirs of Dr. A. J. deRosset, says: "During all this commotion the Mayor sympathized deeply with the people in what he deemed their patriotic opposition to tyranny. He stimulated the timid, fixed the wavering and supported the bold." In a letter of the Town Council, to Tryon, he (the Mayor) disclaims any intention of disrespect to the King or his officers, and concludes thus: "If oppressed by the late Act, some commotion of the country seemed to threaten a departure from moderation, the Governor he hoped would not impute those transactions to any motive other than a conviction on the part of the people, that *moderation ceases to be a virtue when the liberty of the British subject is in danger.*"

Adds McRee: "Was not that well and nobly said? Was it not worthy of Hampden or Cobham? At what point in America was the Stamp Act more fearlessly and gallantly opposed?" Truly *we* may be proud of our grand-sire's part in it.

In 1759, being then thirty-two years of age, Dr. deRosset married Mary Ivy (the first Mrs. deRosset of English parentage). She and her sister Ann (who became the wife of James Moore, a distinguished General in the Revolutionary war), were daughters of a Scotch gentleman residing in Jamaica, W. I.—"a man of note in the plantations." Mr. Ivy died there, and his widow married Mr. Marmaduke Jones, "an eminent councillor at law," and "an English gentleman of the old school, remarkable for personal neatness and precision of manner, character and conduct." With his family, Mr. Jones migrated to North Carolina about the middle of the eighteenth century, and became for a while a partner in a mercantile house in Wilmington; but soon resumed the practice of law, and was so eminent in the profession that he was one of the first five Judges of the Supreme Court appointed by the Council. He was also Attorney General of the Province, and in 1771 was appointed King's Councillor, but resigned it before the War of the Revolution.

In one of Governor Tryon's dispatches to the Government, in 1765, he speaks thus of Mr. Jones: "About forty years of age; a resident of the Province for a

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\*For the full history of this patriotic incident see Waddell's "Colonial Officer and His Times," pp. 73-129, and also the Colonial Records of North Carolina.



## ANNALS OF THE DEROSSET FAMILY

long time, a man of culture and capacity. He was of Knightly race in England (that of Sir Marmaduke Wyirl), was held in high regard as a citizen and a gentleman, and died much respected and lamented."

The Misses Ivy, being of gentle birth and high social rank, and, according to the standard of the times, heiresses in their own right, did not lack for suitors, and Dr. deRosset's marriage with the elder of the sisters met with the hearty approval of both families. She made him an admirable wife, took great interest in his professional work and study, and often, when necessity arose, rendered him valuable assistance. When his death, in 1767, left the community ill supplied with competent medical skill and experience, she used her knowledge for the benefit of all who asked its help. Her gratuitous practice and successful treatment of diseases peculiar to the climate made her a blessing to the patients, both poor and rich, who came to her for help, and won from them many touching tokens of gratitude. Vaccination was then unknown, but she had learned inoculation from her husband, and put it to frequent use. It was doubtless from the lancet of that "venerated Mother" (as he always called her), that her boy—the "dear old Doctor" of the next century—received the virus that rendered him impervious to the dreaded scourge he had so frequently to deal with in his long practice. The mother's skill in surgery was also not to be despised, for on one occasion when this same dear boy had broken his collar-bone, it was her ready help that repaired the injury.

Dr. deRosset built and resided in the dwelling still standing on the N. E. corner of Market and Second streets. Here his children were born, of whom two survived—his daughter, Magdalene Mary, born February 2nd, 1762, and our dearly beloved grandfather, Armand John (2), born November 17, 1767.\*

It will be remembered that Dr. deRosset and his elder brother, Lewis H., were not of the same mind politically. The latter was still a member of the King's Council, while the patriot brother was using all his energies for the better interests of the Colonies.

But his useful and beneficent career was not to last till their Independence was accomplished. On Christmas Day, 1767, when his infant son was but six weeks old, he was called from this troublesome world to the rest of Paradise, and was buried on the anniversary of his birth (just forty-one years before), in the family vault in St. James' Church-yard.

The war clouds were fast gathering and the lonely widow with her two orphaned children, separated by the broad gulf of political antagonism from her only male protector, felt that it would be wise for her and them to accept an offer of marriage from Mr. Adam Boyd, and in May, 1774, she became his wife. He



## ANNALS OF THE DEROSSET FAMILY

was then the editor of the *Cape Fear Mercury*, the patriot organ—was a scholarly man of Scottish descent and a native of Pennsylvania—son of Adam Boyd and Jane Craighead, his wife. He had been a Presbyterian licentiate—not an ordained Minister—but patriotism led him to join the Continental Army, first as an Ensign, then Lieutenant, and finally as Chaplain. He was also one of the Council of Safety, and of the Committee of Correspondence, with Harnett and other patriots. In October, 1783, he assisted at the organization of the North Carolina Society of the Cincinnati, was its Secretary, and later its first Brigade Chaplain. In 1788 he obtained Episcopal ordination at the hands of Bishop Seabury, of Connecticut, and for a short time officiated at St. James' Church, Wilmington, but not as its actual Rector. The poor man was a terrible sufferer from asthma, and spent the last years of his life travelling about from place to place vainly seeking relief, and finally died in Natchez, Miss., in 1803, in great poverty.

In the Records of New Hanover Court House, Book I., pp. 178-183, I find the ante-nuptial contract and inventory of Mrs. deRosset's personal property at the time of her second marriage. Among the articles enumerated are seventeen domestic servants, and a quantity of silverware and household furniture itemized. After all, Mr. Boyd seems to have been but little help or comfort to the family, though his letters, of which several still exist, are full of sentiments of heartfelt affection for "Maggie and John," as he called his step-children. In their early youth he had been a valuable assistant to his wife in instructing them, especially in Mathematics and the Classics; for this grand-pa always felt he owed Mr. Boyd a debt of gratitude, and never spoke of him but with regard and esteem.

During the Revolutionary War, Mrs. Boyd and her children were often sheltered at the country home of her sister, Mrs. General James Moore. As the home of so conspicuous an officer, it was a marked spot for the British, and was several times bombarded by them as a refuge for suspected patriots.

By a singular coincidence, General Moore and his brother, Judge Maurice Moore, of the Supreme Court Bench, died in Wilmington during the Revolution on the same day and in the same house. Their father, Col. Maurice Moore, who, with his brothers, "King" Roger and Nathaniel, had, in 1723, re-established the old Colony of Clarendon on the Cape Fear—abandoned in 1669 by their grand-father, Sir John Yeamans, of Barbadoes. General Moore's wife, Ann Ivy, survived her husband but a few years.

The times were full of privation and peril; families would fly from place to place, seeking in the companionship of friends and relatives relief from danger and alarm. During the British occupation of Wilmington, in 1780-'81, under



## ANNALS OF THE DEROSSET FAMILY

the cruel Colonel Craig, Mrs. Boyd was in a constant state of alarm; but fortunately, the slaves then, as during the Civil War, nearly one hundred years later, were true and faithful to their owners, and were a great source of help and comfort.

One horrible recollection that remained with grand-pa as long as he lived, was the sight of Cornelius Harnett (the idolized patriot of the Cape Fear), "brought through the town, thrown across a horse like a sack of meal," by a squad of Craig's marauders. Mr. Harnett had been ill at a friend's house in Onslow County when he was captured. Driven before them, he had fallen in his tracks from exhaustion and, in an unconscious state, was thus inhumanly treated. He was thrown into prison and died in captivity before the Independence he had so loyally worked for was accomplished.

With patriotism stimulated by such scenes, we are not surprised to hear of the lad, not yet fourteen, shouldering a musket and participating with the patriots in a gallant fight at "The Oaks," near Wilmington. Seventy years later, the venerable Doctor related the incident to Mr. Lossing, who, in his "Field Book of the Revolution," tells the story, regretting that he could not give it in full, and adding, "the local historian should not fail to record it;" but this has never been done.

Magdalene Mary, only daughter of Dr. Moses John deRosset (2) and Mary Ivy, b. February 2, 1762, m. about 1780, Mr. Henry Toomer\* (his third wife), and d. in 1799.

Soon after the marriage of her daughter Mrs. Boyd gave up her own home and spent the remainder of her life enjoying the loving care and devoted ministrations of the Toomer household. Mr. Boyd being continually absent, and the college life of young Armand necessitating his absence, what would she have done without their tender solicitude? She became totally blind long before her death, which occurred in 1798. When the news of his wife's death reached Mr.

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\*The Toomers were a Welsh family of whom Joshua, with a young son, Henry, came to Charlestown, S. C., in 1693. Henry m. Miss Raven and left two sons, Caleb and Joshua. The latter m. Mary Bonneau, and had three sons (1) Anthony, (2) Henry, and (3) Joshua, and one daughter, Elizabeth, who married John Fullerton. Anthony was a prominent officer in the War of the Revolution, and the ancestor of the Charleston Toomers.

Joshua, after the death of his wife, Mary Bonneau, moved with his son, Henry, to Wilmington. Henry's first wife was the mother of Anthony B. Toomer, for many years Clerk of the New Hanover Court. His second wife, Mary Grainger, (?) had one daughter, Mary J., who m. James H. Walker; and his third wife, Magdalene Mary deRosset, had issue: (1) Eliza (Mrs. Henry T. Young), (2) Anthony, (3) Hon. John DeR., 1784-1856, (4) Lewis D., (5) Mary Fullerton (successively Mrs. John B. Lord, Mrs. Wm. Freeman and Mrs. Treadwell).



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Boyd, he consoled himself by writing letters of condolence and an epitaph so unique in style as to be worthy of preservation.

## The Epitaph.

This stone is consecrated  
to the noble purpose of recording  
*Female Merit*  
which  
for many years was known to the world  
by the names  
MARY DEROSSET and MARY BOYD.  
She was singularly attentive and useful  
to the children of affliction.  
In early life she was taught,  
by an excellent mother,  
the principles of the Christian religion.  
By these principles  
she governed her conversation and manners:  
but in the latter part of her life,  
her *patience* and her *faith*  
had a severe exercise appointed them.  
She was entirely deprived of that great blessing,  
*the power of seeing,*  
and was crippled by a stroke of the  
*Dead-Palsy.*  
In this afflicted and helpless condition,  
she experienced the most faithful attentions  
of her children and friends.  
But the dutiful and affectionate assiduity  
of an only daughter,  
MRS. M. TOOMER,  
was such that it admits  
neither Eulogy nor Parallel.  
Heaven pitying her affliction  
sent His messenger  
and  
called her home.

(Perhaps it would look better this way)

x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
x									x
x									x
x									x
x									x
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

I like the first better than  
I did before I wrote the last.

Blindness and pain no longer bring distress:  
To light eternal raised in realms of Joy,  
His praise, who purchased such ecstatic bliss,  
Her tongue in transports ever shall employ.

## ANNALS OF THE DEROSSET FAMILY

Midst pleasures ever new, which ever flow,  
Thro' endless ages that ne'er cease to roll,  
Burning with Heavenly love, she'll ever glow,  
And bliss unceasing still transport her soul.

The epitaph was never inscribed in stone as Mr. Boyd wished for. Mary Ivy, in 1798, was laid to rest in the deRosset vault in St. James' Church-yard. Her remains, with those of the husband of her youth, and all other occupants of that vault, were carefully removed to the family lot in Oakdale Cemetery.

A mural tablet has been placed on the north wall of historic old St. James' Church, in memory of deceased members of the deRosset family. It is of heavy bronze, handsomely designed and of beautiful workmanship. In the centre is the family crest and motto, "In Domino Confido." Above, encircled by the wreath of palm branches, which surrounds the whole, is engraved, "The Souls of the Righteous are in the Hands of God."

Above the crest is written:

"In Blessed Memory of four generations of the deRosset family. Founders, Wardens, Vestrymen of St. James' Church."

Below the crest:

Armand John deRosset, M. D., 1695\*-1760.

Louis Henry deRossett, 1722\*-1786.

Moses John deRosset, M. D., 1726 -1767.

Armand John deRosset, M. D., 1767 -1859.

Armand John deRosset, M. D., 1807 -1897.

Below, underneath in the palm branches:

"Their Name shall be had in Everlasting Remembrance."

To these may be added the name of Col. William Lord deRosset, who in his generation has filled many of the same offices. After his father's death, in 1897, he was elected to succeed him as Treasurer of the Diocese of East Carolina, which position he still holds.

My compilation of existing records of the deRosset family ends with the eighteenth century. The second marriage of Dr. A. J. deRosset (2) to Catherine Fullerton, in 1799, begins a new era in the family history. I feel that my labor of love would be incomplete if I do not tell the story, however briefly, of the father and son who followed those ancient worthies, and whose lives come within my own personal recollection.





The DeRosset Memorial Tablet  
In St. James Church

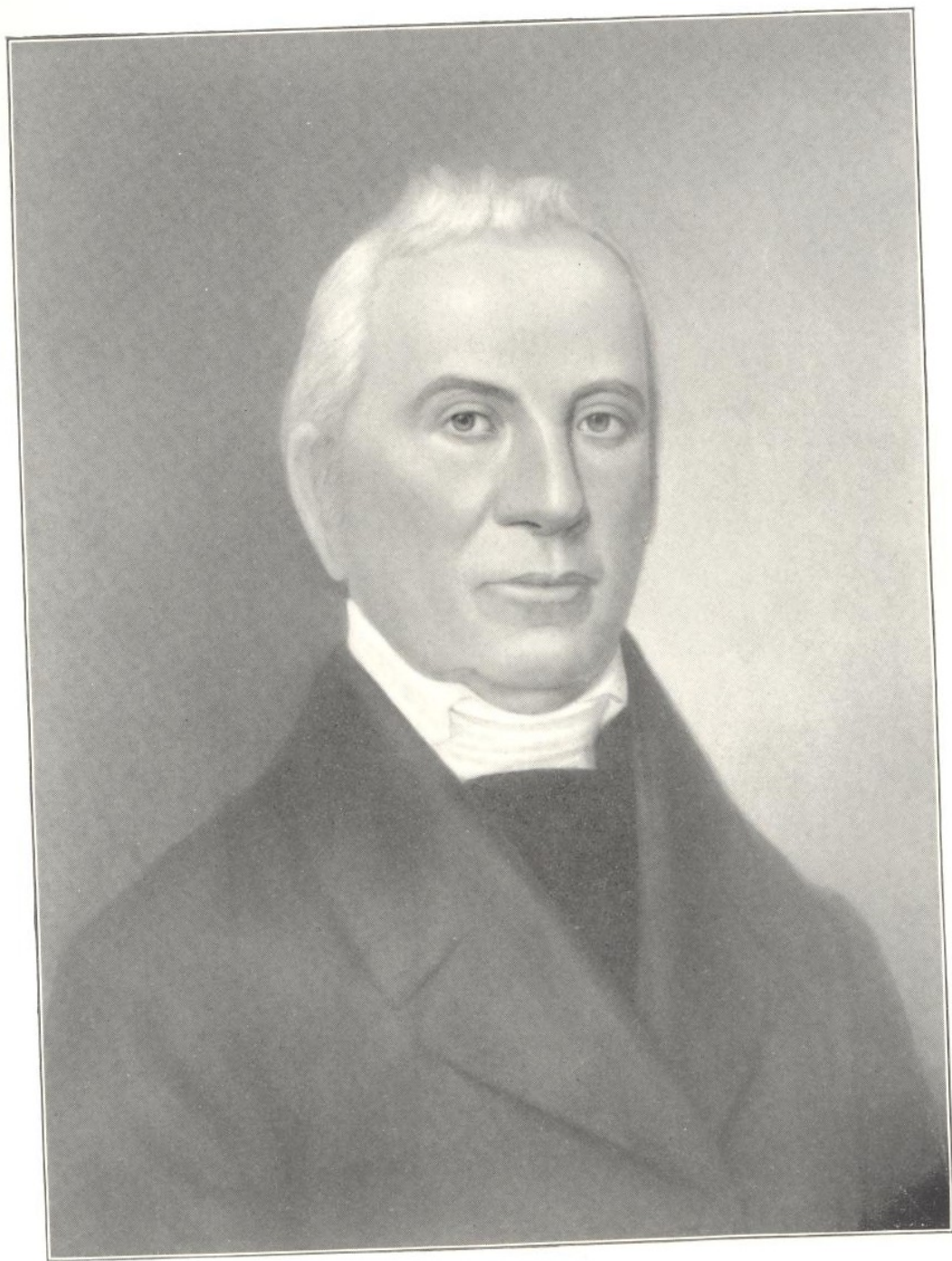
**PART II.**

**Personal Recollections**



“Is it not something in every day life to know that one’s parents, sisters and brothers are high minded, strong and true? Surely in such a thought there is incentive to a worthier life, and how is that motive strengthened by the knowledge that one can reach back through past generations and find in all the same noble characteristics.”





Armand John DeRosset, M.D., II  
1767—1859

## CHAPTER I.

ARMAND JOHN DEROSSET, M. D., II.

b. November 17, 1767—d. April 1, 1859.

*"Is it not something in every day life to know that one's parents, sisters and brothers are high minded, strong and true? Surely in such a thought there is incentive to a worthier life, and how is that motive strengthened by the knowledge that one can reach back through past generations and find in all the same noble characteristics."*

In his autobiographical sketch, my grandfather writes:

"Though we are descended from so-called noble blood, I do not claim for myself or for my children any consideration beyond that which may be due to our own qualities of mind and heart, and to the exercise of such virtues as adorn the worthy citizen and the Christian gentleman."

In the daily struggle for existence in this democratic country, the old aristocratic spirit and pride may have been in a measure lost, but the "virtues of the worthy citizen and the Christian gentleman" we do claim to have been conspicuously exhibited in later generations. Let us not boast the titles of our ancestors; they were their possessions, not ours. And, as Ruskin says, "Should we not think it better to be nobly *remembered* than to be nobly *born*?"

Our "Roses sprang and budded fair" in this new soil. Let us see to it that they gather fresh grace and sweetness with every generation.

Thus far I have gathered up only the records and traditions of long past years. Now, having reached the period and actors of an age within my own recollection, I enter upon familiar scenes as upon holy ground, so sacredly do I treasure every remembrance of those men and women I have seen and known, whose holy, useful lives have added fresh lustre to their ancestral name, and left in my own heart the tenderest emotions of reverent love. Ah! they

"Were men who did not stoop nor lie in wait  
For wealth, or honors, or for worldly state.  
Their powers shed round them in the daily strife,  
And mild concerns of ordinary life."  
The gracious influence of upright men  
Who worked for good, and kept their conscience clean.

It is a noticeable fact that for several generations the deRosset name was transmitted by a single descendant. There have been sisters who have died unmarried, or married and lived under other names; but when there have been



## ANNALS OF THE DEROSSET FAMILY

two brothers, one has invariably died without issue. Each father grieved at the long delayed fulfillment of the pledge of his Huguenot ancestor, whose marriage was "ordained (not only) for the glory of God (but), for the increase of the human race." But this generation sees the hope realized, for six of my father's seven sons have sons of their own, who may carry on the name to posterity.

Another fact worthy of remark is that for 186 years there has been an unbroken succession of physicians in the family, beginning with the graduate of Basle, Switzerland.

Dr. Armand J. deRosset I., 1695\*-1760.

Dr. Moses John deRosset I., 1726-1767.

Dr. Armand John deRosset II., 1767-1859.

Dr. Moses John deRosset II., 1797-1826.

Dr. Armand John deRosset III., 1807-1897.

Dr. Moses John deRosset III., 1838-1881.

This is a professional record without parallel, and its suspension in the present generation is much to be regretted. For 162 years, Wilmington had among its citizens a Dr. deRosset, if we except the period of the minority of Dr. Armand John deRosset II.

The memoirs of Dr. A. J. deRosset II. were written shortly after his death. in 1859, by Mr. Griffith J. McRee, and leave little for me to add concerning him as a citizen and professional man. But my "Annals" will be far from complete if I do not gather up some reminiscences of his home life, and of the household who all loved and venerated him to an unusual degree.

He was the first male of his name born on this side of the Atlantic. His was a long life, covering nearly a century as eventful as the world has ever known, a century of marvellous inventions and discoveries, of progress and development. Born while yet our country was an oppressed colony of Great Britain, he lived to see the Independence of these Sovereign States, won by the heroism of their patriot sons—he saw the republic extend its borders by purchase, annexation and conquest, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the frozen regions of the North to the great Southern Gulf—and passed away

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\*As an instance of remarkable longevity of life it may be noted that the lives of Dr. deRossett II. and his son, Dr. A. J. deRosset, Jr., covered a period of 130 years—from November, 1767, to December, 1897. And adding that of Dr. M. J. deRosset, born in 1726, the three successive lives lasted 171 years. At one time there were five members of the household whose lives aggregated 407 years.



## ANNALS OF THE DE ROSSET FAMILY

just before the thunders of the War Between the States were to shake its foundations and threaten its dissolution.

But *his* life entered into no strife nor turmoil. Tranquil and peaceful, 'neath the shade of his own roof-tree, he pursued his beneficent career, winning the loving reverence of hosts of patients who knew him as "the dear old doctor," and the highest esteem and regard of the community where his honorable life of nearly ninety-two years was spent.

The death of Dr. M. J. deRosset I. left his son six weeks old, with a sister five years his senior, to the loving care of a young mother (Mary Ivy), a woman of culture, of strong intellect and of great piety and worth.

Their father's only brother (Lewis H. deRosset), of whom we have already heard, was a King's Councillor who, when the war troubles came, remained faithful to his oaths of office under the Crown, and in 1779 was banished from the Province by the Committee of Safety, and died a few years later in exile in London, England. Left with no protector and guide, the mother and sister rose to the full measure of their duty, educating and training the boy by precept and example in those principles of moral and religious duty, honor, integrity and benevolence which distinguished his long and useful life.

Neither did they neglect his mental culture, but gave him every advantage in their power for the attainment of knowledge. Their instruction in English Literature and Mathematics was supplemented, as has been told, by the teaching of his step-father, the Rev. Adam Boyd, who was a gentleman of fine literary and classical attainments. After a short sojourn at a school in Hillsboro, N. C., at the age of seventeen years he entered Nassau Hall (now Princeton College), New Jersey, fully equipped for competition with the most privileged and brightest of his fellow-students.

At this time the family finances were at a low ebb; he tells us that he left home with a sum of money incredibly small after his matriculation expenses were paid. Conscientiously industrious, he made such good use of his time that the four years' course of study was completed in three years. His youth, his studious habits and his purity of character attracted the attention of some of his seniors, who took an interest in him and gave him advice and encouragement of great value. Among those to whom he felt specially indebted were Robert Goodloe Harper, of Maryland, afterwards distinguished as a statesman and jurist and political writer; and Dr. Joseph Caldwell, afterwards President of the University of North Carolina, who is remembered to have said in later years that he had shed bitter tears at being outstripped by his youthful fellow-student.



## ANNALS OF THE DE ROSSET FAMILY

Being unable to bear the expense of the long journey home for his vacation, by the advice of Dr. Harper, he spent the holiday months pursuing the study of the junior class, with such success that he was promoted to the senior class at the next term. He also eked out his resources by following the example of his good friend in "tutoring" the younger boys in evening classes.

Graduating in the summer of 1787, he returned home, taking passage with several others on a schooner, which was wrecked at Willoughby's Point. The boys were rescued and hospitably cared for by the family of that name; but their clothing and other effects were a total loss. His companions were Richard Quince and his cousin, Anthony Toomer.

In the fall of the same year he returned North to attend the Medical School of the University of Pennsylvania. The genius and skill of the celebrated Dr. Benjamin Rush had already given promise of the fame that institution was destined to attain. So earnest a student could not fail to win the esteem and friendship of the great physician, who soon admitted him to the social advantages of his refined home. There he met and enjoyed the honor of several interviews with Benjamin Franklin and other eminent men of the day; and the friendship with Dr. Rush's family was cemented and continued during a long period of years. Several letters of their family correspondence are still preserved and treasured with our family papers.

### *Contemporary Account of Conferring the Degree of M. D. on Dr. Armand John deRosset by the University of Pennsylvania.*

The Pennsylvania Packet, and Daily Advertiser of June 19, 1790, contains the following article:

"Philadelphia, June 19,

On Tuesday, June 8, the Commencement was held by adjournment, for the purpose of conferring the degree of Doctor of Medicine, in the College hall of this city. The business was opened with a prayer, by the Rev. Dr. Smith, Provost of the College. A pertinent address was afterwards delivered to the audience, by Dr. Shippen, in which several judicious reasons were given for conferring the degree of Doctor, instead of Bachelor of Medicine in the College. The following candidates were then examined upon the subjects of their theses by the different Professors of Medicine, viz:

Armand John deRosset, of North Carolina,  
De Febribus Intermittentibus.  
James Proudfit, of the State of New York,  
De Pleuritide Vera.  
John Pennington, of Philadelphia,  
On Fermentation.

The Latin theses were examined and defended, in the Latin language. The theses on Fermentation, which, for the modern terms employed in it, was necessarily written in English, was examined and defended in the same language.